

Volume IV, Number 8 December 2010

SEVENTH DISTRICT NEWS

By Linda Kostin

**Seventh Judicial District ProBonoNY
Coordinator**

On October 29, 2010, attorneys in Rochester and throughout the Seventh Judicial District joined in the ABA's Second Annual National Celebration of Pro Bono by attending "Ethics Redux." The live pro bono CLE program held at Rochester's Hall of Justice was broadcast district-wide thanks to the support of Hon. Thomas M. Van Strydonck, Seventh Judicial District Administrative Judge. ProBonoNY and Volunteer Legal Services Project of Monroe County, Inc., co-sponsored the program. *The Daily Record* generously provided refreshments for Monroe County attendees.

Sharing their expertise in ethics as CLE presenters were the following: Hon. Marian W. Payson, United States Magistrate Judge, Western District of New York; Gregory J. Huether, Esq., Chief Counsel, Attorney Grievance Committee,

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NINTH DISTRICT: NEW FAMILY COURT ATTORNEY- OF-THE-DAY PROGRAM

By Carol Neiditch

Ninth Judicial District ProBonoNY Coordinator

The Rockland County ProBonoNY Local Action Committee, chaired by the Hon. Thomas E. Walsh, Rockland County Surrogate, has instituted the first attorney-of-the-day program in the Ninth Judicial District. The program is known as Project FAIRPLAN, which stands for Family Attorneys In Rockland Providing Legal Assistance Now.

Hon. Linda Christopher, Rockland County Family Court Judge and ProBonoNY Committee member, saw the need for such a program first-hand and spearheaded a year-long effort to get the project underway. The program is designed to help *pro se* parties who come to court seeking legal relief, but who have no specific knowledge concerning the substance of the law, necessary papers,

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Appellate Division, Fourth Department; and Christopher K. Werner, Esq., Boylan, Brown, Code, Vigdor & Wilson LLP. *(Please see photo on page 4.)* Over 50 attorneys attended the CLE program and committed to rendering pro bono legal services in their communities through the Finger Lakes Volunteer Lawyer Service, Southern Tier Volunteer Lawyers Project, Legal Aid Society of Mid-NY, and Volunteer Legal Services Project of Monroe County.

Western New York Law Center in Buffalo produced DVDs of the CLE presentations. Seven attorneys in Livingston, Steuben, and Monroe Counties are registered to view DVDs of program, which will also be used to train additional attorneys in the future.

Also coinciding with the ABA's Second Annual National Celebration of Pro Bono, Corning Incorporated in-house attorneys stepped up to draft wills, health care proxies, and powers of attorney for eight low-income residents of Steuben County at a two-part clinic held on October 28 and November 16.

United Way of the Southern Tier co-sponsored the clinic sessions, which

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NINTH DISTRICT ATTORNEY-OF-THE-DAY PROGRAM

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procedure, or potentially available remedies. Attorneys of the day provide advice concerning these matters and, where needed, assistance in preparation of appropriate Family Court pleadings. From the court's perspective, this results in greater effectiveness and efficiency.

After procedural and logistical details were worked out, the Committee sponsored a free CLE program on Family Court Best Practices, which included a presentation on Family Court proceedings by Judge Christopher. The CLE program also included a presentation concerning domestic violence by Julie Gamache, Esq., attorney for the Rockland Family Shelter; and a session on the ethics of pro bono limited-scope legal representation led by Erin Guven, Esq., Director of Pro Bono Affairs at Legal Services of the Hudson Valley and Co-Chair of the Ninth District ProBonoNY Committee. Approximately 30 attorneys attended the program, most of whom signed up to volunteer in the attorney-of-the-day project.

The project began operating as a pilot project at the end of October. Experienced Family Court attorneys are

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were held at the United Way offices in Corning. Southeastern Steuben County Habitat for Humanity and AIDS Care also collaborated on the clinics by assisting with client outreach.

In preparation for the clinic, ten Corning Incorporated attorneys attended a CLE program presented at Corning Incorporated by Dale Clark, a Corning Community College Professor Emeritus and attorney in private practice in Bath, NY, who limits his practice to estate and probate matters. The program was sponsored by ProBonoNY, Southern Tier Legal Services, and Volunteer Legal Services Project of Monroe County.



ProBonoNY Bulletin On Line

By John Ritchie

I'm pleased to announce that the ProBonoNY BULLETIN and its predecessor, the ProBonoNY Newsletter, are now again available on line. All four volumes (2007-2010) are on the court system's Access to Justice website at http://nycourts.gov/ip/nya2j/publication_s.shtml. In the reasonably near future, I hope to be able to update and reinstate the ProBonoNY general web page, plus individual Committees' sites.

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paired up with those less familiar with Family Court matters. They are regularly supervised by Ms. Guven in person (or, when she cannot attend, by way of detailed written instructions, forms, and contact information for mentoring). Every Monday morning, the volunteer attorneys sit in a space next to the court sign-in desk, and Family Court personnel refer individuals needing assistance directly to the project's volunteers, both in person and by phone.

The attorneys of the day have dealt with matters involving support, adoption, and custody. In cases that are too complex or otherwise inappropriate for limited-scope legal services, the clients have been referred to the Pro Bono Unit at Legal Services of the Hudson Valley—where we work to provide them with full representation by volunteers recruited through the ProBonoNY Committee's activities. The attorney-of-the-day project started as a pilot; but it has been so successful that it will be continued in 2011.



SEVENTH DISTRICT "ETHICS REDUX" CLE PROGRAM

National Pro Bono Week, Rochester, October 29, 2010



"Ethics Redux" panelists Gregory J. Huether, Christopher K. Werner, and the Hon. Marian W. Payson, 10/29/10.